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STATE-ARMY-NAVY-AIR FORCE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

REVIEW OF SANACC STUDIES PERTAINING TO PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE
Reference: SANACC 304 Series

Note by the Secretaries

The attached report and its enclosure, prepared by the State-Army-Navy-Air Force Coordinating Subcommittee for Special Studies and Evaluations, on its own initiative, are circulated to the Committee for information.

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(Revised 23 July 1948)

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REVIEW OF SANACC STUDIES PERTAINING TO PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

Report by the
Subcommittee for Special Studies and Evaluations

THE PROBLEM

1. To provide a historical background and brief of the work to date of the SANAC Subcommittee for Special Studies and Evaluations (Psychological Warfare),

DISCUSSION

2. International trends indicate the desirability of making available to appropriate officials and pertinent government agencies a summary of the results of SANACC studies to date in the field of psychological warfare. With this in view the enclosure, "Review of SANACC Studies Pertaining to Psychological Warfare", has been prepared by the Subcommittee for Special Studies and Evaluations on its own initiative.

RECOMMENDATION

3. The SANAC Subcommittee for Special Studies and Evaluations recommends that the enclosure, "REVIEW OF SANACC STUDIES PERTAINING TO PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE", be circulated to the State-Army-Navy-Air Force Coordinating Committee for information.

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REVIEW OF SANACC STUDIES PERTAINING TO PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE
Reference: SANACC 304 Series

1. On 5 March 1946 Secretary of War (Robert P. Patterson) in a letter to the Secretary of Navy (James Forrestal) suggested that a group of qualified persons, both civilian and military, plan and direct a study of psychological warfare in order to improve the organization and methods for future national use of psychological warfare.

2. On 22 March 1946 the Secretary of Navy, in reply to the Secretary of War's suggestion, recommended that the Department of State (Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs) should engage in the proposed study. The Secretary of Navy further suggested that the Joint Staff Planners of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were the proper agency for coordination of Army-Navy interests in psychological warfare.

3. Subsequent to the foregoing exchange of letters, the Joint Staff Planners appointed an ad hoc Committee to study and report on the future status of military psychological warfare. This ad hoc Committee was directed to review World War II efforts in military psychological warfare and recommend:

a. A peacetime military organization for keeping military psychological warfare in a ready-for-mobilization status;

b. A wartime military organization for ensuring effective planning, coordination and implementation of military psychological warfare in the armed services and the integration of national psychological warfare with military plans.

4. On 4 June 1946 a memorandum (SWNCC 304) by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air (John L. Sullivan) to SWNCC recommended that an ad hoc Committee be appointed to study and report

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on the future status of psychological warfare. The Assistant Secretary's memorandum went on to say:

"As an approach to the Committee's problem, I consider it may be assumed that future national psychological warfare effort will continue under non-military control, and that integration of the national effort with military plans will be requisite so as to assist and not to interfere with those plans. With this assumption, it is proposed that the Committee be directed to review World War II efforts in psychological warfare, and recommend:

"a. A peacetime organization for keeping psychological warfare in a ready-for-mobilization status;

"b. A wartime psychological warfare organization;

both organizations to be assigned such directives as will insure effective planning, coordination and implementation, particularly with respect to the integration of national psychological warfare with military plans."

5. The ad hoc Committee (constituted as a result of paragraph 4 above) recommended that the SWNCC approve a Charter (Appendix "A" to SWNCC 304/1, dated 30 April 1947), establishing a Subcommittee on psychological warfare as the agency of SWNCC charged with:

a. Preparation of national plans and implementing directives relating to the employment of psychological warfare in time of war (or threat of war as determined by the President), and for transmission of subject plans to SWNCC.

b. Preparation of plans for orderly and effective organizational transition of the Subcommittee from peacetime to wartime status, and for transmission of these plans to SWNCC.

c. Coordination of implementation of approved plans and directives as specified in a, preceding, in the absence of a national wartime organization for psychological warfare.

d. Guidance and supply of necessary information, including implementing requirements therefor, concerning national psychological warfare plans to appropriate policy offices of the State, War and Navy Departments, and to the Director of Central Intelligence, and to authorized coordinating agencies of other departments of the government of the United States.

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6. SWNCC 304/1, as amended by SWNCC 304/2, dated 30 April 1947 outlined the following policies:

a. Psychological warfare is an essential factor in the achievement of national aims and military objectives in time of war, or threat of war as determined by the President.

b. The Department of State has primary interest in psychological warfare policy determination which affects the foreign policy of the United States.

c. The armed services have a vital interest in psychological warfare policy determination which affects the national security and the conduct of military operations of the United States.

d. Appropriate agencies of the government will be required to assist in wartime implementation of approved psychological warfare plans.

e. Plans and directives for psychological warfare which are to be implemented in actual or projected military areas, theatres, or commands will be transmitted by rapid communication, to the Military Commanders concerned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff only.

f. The implementation of approved plans and directives for psychological warfare in actual or projected military areas, theatres, or commands will be the responsibility solely of the Commanders concerned.

7. SWNCC 304/1 also drew attention to certain aspects of psychological warfare practices in World War II which require study and solution (SWNCC 304/1, page 14, 15, Appendix "B") as follows:

a. Coordination of OSS "black" and OWI "white" plans and operations at the Washington level remained on a basis of informal cooperation, which did not always result in coordination.

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b. The national psychological organization was such that there was duplication of effort, competition for available supplies of personnel, slow and limited coordination and integration into the major military, political and economic programs of the government.

c. Directives overseas were subject to delays in transmission which often negated their use.

d. Military Theatre Commanders received psychological warfare directives from OSS and OWI.

8. In its analysis of factors bearing on the formation of a Psychological Warfare Organization, the ad hoc Committee considered the following: (SWNCC 304/1, page 18, Appendix "B")

a. The existing peacetime organizations within the governmental structure which are charged with information responsibilities and which might be integrated, at least in part, into a wartime organization for psychological warfare.

b. Personnel in the foregoing organizations who have experience in psychological warfare and who might be assigned to positions within the wartime organizations.

9. In the development of an organization for wartime preparedness in psychological warfare, the ad hoc Committee considered the following as fundamental principles: (SWNCC 304/1, page 18, Appendix "B")

a. The State Department has primary interest in the foreign policy aspects.

b. The armed services have a vital interest in psychological warfare policy determination which affects the national security and the conduct of military operations of the United States.

c. Other appropriate agencies of the government should be required to assist in planning and implementation of psychological warfare.

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d. Coordination of "white" and "black" psychological warfare is a necessity in any national effort.

e. Procedure finally developed during World War II in the planning and implementing of psychological warfare should be used initially as a basis for future wartime organization and procedure, with such minor administrative modifications as appeared desirable at the close of the war.

10. Among the tasks which were visualized for a peacetime Psychological Warfare Committee, SWNCC 304/1 (Page 21, Appendix "B", 13c(1)) envisaged selection on an interdepartmental basis of personnel for wartime assignment.

With respect to training, SWNCC 304/1 states:

"In addition, it is considered necessary to examine the integration into the military organization of such personnel as may be assigned to military theatres of operation."

11. In the discussion of communications, SWNCC 304/1 (page 22, Appendix "B", 13e) states:

"Lack of rapid transmission during World War II often resulted in receipt of psychological warfare directives after events had overtaken their contents. Provision of rapid and secure communications to remedy this situation is considered of such importance that a separate radio channel or high priority classification allocation for psychological warfare communications is indicated."

12. SWNCC 304/1 (page 22, Appendix "B", 13g), in the discussion of a wartime organization, states:

"Any change in the composition or functions of this organization to conform to possible future changes in the structure of governmental departments or agencies should be based on the principles of:

(1) Integration with political policy and action, and with military plans and operations, both on the policy and operating levels; and,

(2) Coordination of 'white' and 'black' psychological warfare measures."

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13. The SWNCC Subcommittee, subsequently known as the Subcommittee for Special Studies and Evaluations, was established 29 April 1947 in accordance with the Recommendations contained in SWNCC 304/1, as amended by SWNCC 304/2. The Subcommittee thereafter produced additional papers for the SANACC 304 series, which contained facts, opinions, conclusions and recommendations pertinent to the planning for a National War-time Psychological Warfare Organization.

14. SWNCC 304/6, approved in principle by SANACC on 8 January 1948, considered the following problem:

"To determine the responsibilities and functions of a Psychological Warfare Agency, taking into account the related functions and activities of other government agencies, with a view to recommending a suitable organization within the government for the discharge of these functions in time of war."

15. The substance of the Conclusions of SWNCC 304/6 is:

a. That in time of war (or threat of war as determined by the President) a Psychological Warfare Organization should be established under the National Security Council or SWNCC, with a Director appointed by the President, empowered to provide unified direction and authoritative coordination of the national psychological warfare effort and activities, and operations related thereto; the Organization to be provided by Executive Order or under law with strategic guidance, information, and allocations of resources of manpower, funds, facilities and materials essential to proper functioning; the Director to use established agencies to perform their functions appropriate to these objectives and to employ such persons as he deems essential; the Director to be the Chairman of a Policy and Planning Board, with representation from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and representatives of the Department of State, Army, Navy, Air Force and the Central Intelligence Agency.

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b. The Organization should have access to and be provided with necessary intelligence; and should plan and subject to approval of plans, develop, control and coordinate all foreign and domestic psychological warfare activities.

c. The Organization should formulate and carry out through all appropriate facilities information programs designed to facilitate the development of an informed and intelligent understanding at home and abroad of the status and progress of any war effort in which the United States may be engaged, and of the war policies, activities and aims of the government; and coordinate in consonance with approved policies the war informational activities of all federal departments and agencies.

d. That a psychological warfare category should be established to facilitate personnel placement immediately and training should be instituted as soon as possible within the Departments of the Army, Navy and Air Force; and rosters should be established of personnel available for psychological warfare in the Department of State, and of persons so engaged in OWI and OSS in World War II.

16. SWNCC 304/6 indicated that the current agenda of the Subcommittee contemplated special studies with respect to the following items:

a. Immediate employment of psychological warfare in any war crisis considering the probable short time to mobilize.

b. "Black" propaganda in all its aspects.

c. Integration of civilian and military personnel into a wartime organization.

d. Propaganda measures with reference to any situation in which a zone of combat exists within the Continental United States.

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17. In approving SWNCC 304/6, SANACC held in abeyance the determination as to whether the National Security Council and/or SWNCC should be the agency to which the proposed Psychological Warfare Agency be accountable.

18. SANACC 304/12, approved by SANACC 7 April 1948, "as a basis for further planning", considered the problem:

"To provide a plan for a national Wartime Psychological Warfare Organization which may be used as a basis for further planning."

19. SANACC 304/12

a. contained a basic plan for a national wartime Psychological Warfare Organization as a possible basis for further planning; and,

b. proposed the tentative "cover" name of National Security Information Agency (NSIA) for such an organization.

20. SANACC 304/12 states:

a. In view of the authoritative control and coordination that such an organization will require, it is assumed that the National Security Council will eventually supervise the activities of such an organization.

b. The duties of the Director are:

(1) To advise the National Security Council concerning psychological warfare.

(2) To coordinate the efforts of appropriate governmental departments and agencies and other supporting activities concerning psychological warfare.

(3) To develop policies and programs in support of national policy, plans and operations.

(4) To exercise general direction, authority and control of NSIA and of such other facilities as are placed under his jurisdiction.

(5) To establish and maintain close liaison with the Central Intelligence Agency.

(6) To communicate with theatre commanders through the Joint Chiefs of Staff only. (SWNCC 304/1 and 304/2)

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c. It is the present intention that Domestic and Foreign Operations will be coordinated and administered in a single "Plans and Operations" subdivision thereby preventing unnecessary duplication and waste of national effort.

d. The Deputy of Services (NSIA) will maintain close liaison with the supply and logistics divisions of the Departments of State, Army, Navy and Air Force.

e. The agency (NSIA) will use established government intelligence activities to the degree consistent with essential operations; close liaison will be established and maintained with the Central Intelligence Agency.

21. A memorandum to the SANACC from the Joint Chiefs of Staff circulated as SANACC 304/14 (SM-9895, 5 April 1948) commented on SWNCC 304/6 from the military point of view, as follows:

"a. The national security will be adversely affected if a working nucleus for the planning and coordination of psychological warfare is not brought into existence prior to war (or threat of war as determined by the President);

"b. The effect of the recommendations in SWNCC 304/6, as approved by the State-Army-Navy-Air Force Coordinating Committee, would be to postpone, to a dangerously late date, the establishment of a Psychological Warfare Organization; and,

"c. There should be established, as soon as practicable, under the National Security Council, a Psychological Warfare Organization, but with its peacetime scope and activities limited to that of a working nucleus for planning and coordination.

"Accordingly, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that the pertinent Conclusions and Recommendations of SWNCC 304/6 be amended in the light of the above comments."

22. On 7 April 1948, the SANACC concurred in the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and SANACC 304/14 was forwarded for the consideration of the National Security Council together with SANACC 304/12. The Subcommittee has not been apprised of any subsequent action by the National Security Council.

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23. The Subcommittee is presently considering the following problems:

a. Determination of functions and resources in the National Government which might be utilized by a Psychological Warfare Agency.

b. Determination of personnel policies relating to training, and determination of rosters and classification categories for a U.S. Information Agency.

c. Determination of the measures to be undertaken in the event of an emergency.

d. Determination of types of personnel and skills to be mobilized for psychological warfare through the National Security Resources Board.

e. Determination of operating relationship with the Research and Development Board for essential research in methods, techniques and equipment for producing mass psychological reactions.

f. Determination of the scope of a Domestic Information Branch of a National Psychological Warfare Agency.

g. Legal problems attendant on the establishment, organization and operation of a National Psychological Warfare Agency.

h. Analysis of the relationship between the proposed national organization for Psychological Warfare and the closely related activities of censorship and civil defense.

i. Determination of possible themes for propaganda based upon estimated national objectives and U.S. Foreign Policy.

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